

Message Text

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64

ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2725

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 1975

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, CI, US

SUBJ: SUSPENSION OF CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC RADIO BALMACEDA

REF: SANTIAGO 1920-C

1. SUMMARY. PRESS CHIEF OF PDC'S RADIO BALMACEDA DISCUSSES SUSPENSION OF STATION, CLAIMS RADIO HAD NOT BEEN WARNED BEFORE PRECEDING WEEK, AND THAT SPECIFIC REASONS FOR CLOSING NOT GIVEN. BELIEVES RADIO REPORTS HAD BEEN GIVING IMPRESSION OF PERSECUTION OF PDC WHICH GOC WISHED TO AVOID. RADIO HAS PROTESTED BOTH CLOSING AND ANTI-BALMACEDA EDITORIAL IN GOC NEWSPAPER TO NATIONAL JOURNALISTS' ORGANIZATION. NATIONAL RADIO ASSN. (ARCHI) ALSO PROTESTED. END SUMMARY.

2. IO AND AIO CALLED ON IGNACIO GONZALEZ CAMUS, PRESS CHIEF RADIO BALMACEDA APRIL 1. GONZALEZ EAGER TO TALK, DESPITE PRESENCE ARMED CARABINERO IN OUTER OFFICER, SAID GOVERNMENT HAD GIVEN NO SPECIFIC REASONS FOR SUSPENSION. BELIEVES SUSPENSION WAS RESULT OF THREE REPORTS ON PDC PROBLEMS DURING PRECEDING WEEK: FORCED RESIGNATIONS OF ANDRES ZALDIVAR AND MAYOR OF CONCEPCION AND REPORT ON DESTRUCTION OF GALLEY PROOFS CLAUDIO ORREGO BOOK.

3. GONZALEZ SAID BALMACEDA USED ZALDIVAR RESIGNATION LETTER IN ENTIRETY, ONLY PRESS ORGAN TO DO SO. APPARENTLY ORIGINALLY CONFIDENTIAL

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ALSO ONLY ORGAN TO REPORT ON DESTRUCTION OF BOOK. COPY OF NEWS

REPORT ON ITS DESTRUCTION GIVEN TO EMBOFFS APPEARS FAIRLY STRAIGHTFORWARD, NO COMMENTARY. BUT GONZALEZ SAID REPORT OF BOOK DESTRUCTION WAS INDICTMENT ENOUGH IN ITSELF, THAT "HEARING OF BOOK DESTRUCTION IN ANY COUNTRY MAKES YOUR HAIR STAND ON END." (INDEPENDENT BUT PRO-PDC NEWSWEEKLY "ERCULLA" 2 APRIL EDITION GIVES SUMMARY ORREGO BOOK INDICATING ITS THEME IS THAT "RESPECT FOR DIGNITY OF MAN, VALUE OF LIBERTY, SOLIDARITY AND JUSTICE CANNOT BE ABANDONED WITHOUT PAYING TERRIBLE PRICE. AND THIS APPEARS TODAY AS LESSON WHICH HAS NOT BEEN LEARNED...ACCORDINGLY CHRISTIANS SHOULD, HEROICALLY, CONTINUE STRUGGLE FOR HUMANIST IDEAL.")

4. GONZALEZ CALIMED RADIO HAD CHECKED NEWS REPORTS BACK OVER TWO MONTH PERIOD AND FOUND NOTHING WHICH COULD BE CONSTRUED AS "DANGER TO PEACE AND SECURITY OF NATION". SAID STATION PERSONNEL EXTREMELY CAREFUL TO BE ACCURATE IN REPORTS, BECAUSE CANNOT AFFORD MISTAKES.

5. GONZALEZ READ EMBOFFS PARTS OF LETTER HE SENT APRIL 1 TO NATIONAL JOURNALISTS ORGANIZATION REQUESTING DEFENSE OF FREEDOM OF PRESS, PROTESTING CLOSING, AND DEMANDING FULL DISCLOSURE OF REASONS FOR SUSPENSION AND IMMEDIATE REOPENING. LETTER ALSO PROTESTED EDITORIAL IN GOC-OWNED NEWSPAPER "LA PATRIA" MARCH 31, WHICH STATED RADIO BALMACEDA HAD ABUSED FREEDOM OF PRESS EXISTING IN CHILE, AND COMPARED STATION REPORTING TO "MARXIST-LENINIST" POLICIES OF NEWS MEDIA IN ALLENDE PERIOD.

6. SOME SANTIAGO PAPERS TUESDAY CARRIED STATEMENT BY CARLOS FIGUEROA, PRESIDENT OF CHILEAN BROADCASTERS ASSOCIATION (ARCHI) ASKING NATIONAL DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL COMMUNICATION, COL. ORLANDO JEREZ, TO LIFT BAN, CLAIMING THAT HIS OFFICE HAD NO LEGAL RIGHT TO CLOSE DOWN A RADIO STATION. "EL MERCURIO" SAID HIS REPLY WAS POSSIBLE IN "NEXT FEW HOURS" BUT SO FAR NOT FORTHCOMING.
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